



To the media
To the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH)

Oberglatt, 27. July 2018

World Hepatitis Day 28 July 2018: There are still hepatitis C patients who are not treated in Switzerland!

Since October 2017, the situation has improved dramatically for most people suffering from hepatitis C in Switzerland. From then on, a whole range of medicines that have been added to the list of specialities (SL) by the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) must be reimbursed by the health insurers. These so-called DAA drugs achieve a cure rate of approx. 97%.

For the 3% of patients who could not eliminate the virus and had a relapse, there are few alternatives: DAA drugs that have also been developed especially for this group of patients. In other countries, it is already standard practice for these patients to receive the drug Vosevi. This drug was approved by Swissmedic in December 2017, 8 months ago, for the treatment of this group of patients.¹

And once again, the FOPH is blocking the access of an approved HCV drug. As in the past with standard therapies, **the FOPH is fighting its price war on the expense of people, some of whom are life-threateningly ill**, and refuses to put the drug on the list of specialties. This leads to many disputes with certain health insurance companies that do not want to cover the costs of such secondary treatment and refer to the list of specialties of the FOPH.

Each patient who then needs a liver transplant as a result of this FOPH policy costs the premium payer around CHF 500,000! These costs could be prevented if the FOPH puts the drug on the SL. This would mean that the health insurers would have to provide such secondary treatment for the approximately 3% of these patients, but would save enormous follow-up costs - not to mention the human suffering for the sick and relatives caused by this policy.

We already know of several such cases, including critically ill patients with liver cirrhosis. How many must die before the FOPH acts?

On World Hepatitis Day on 28 July, the Swiss Hepatitis C Association SHCA urges the FOPH to add this drug, which is life-saving for many people, to its list of specialties.

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¹ <https://www.swissmedic.ch/swissmedic/de/home/humanarzneimittel/authorisations/new-medicines/vosevi-filmtabletten-voxilaprevirum.html>